

Temple Yard – client vision

Temple Yard is an exciting, mixed use development located within a short walk of the city centre and ideally located for access to Bristol Temple Meads station. It has become Bristol's most dynamic new development; a gateway and showcase to a new city quarter, a home for collaboration and a key transitional site through which to move from the traditional city in to the new mixed use quarter of St Philip's.

The architecture of the site is reflective of the innovative and creative history of the area, whilst also sympathetic to the neighbouring Bristol Temple Meads station. The architecture of the site becomes bolder to the east, where the historic constraints are lessened, with a desire for the development to embrace the opportunities presented by the riverside environment.

The geographical and physical constraints of the site have presented an opportunity; facilitating the development of a campus-type development on the island whereby a well-balanced range of uses will support its own defined and inclusive community. Its character is wholly Bristolian; creative and independent.

The fact that the site has a critical mass of office development, has a bespoke target sector (focused around the financial and professional services and creative/digital sectors), has a direct access from the station, can draw on talent and research from the university campus and has the feel of a well-established community has all allowed the site to become a destination – especially for businesses seeking to locate head-office functions in a place where costs are lower and staff retention rates, owing to quality of life factors, are higher. The arrival of multi-national corporations and small, funky creative businesses to the site has driven the reputation and attractiveness of the site and has also allowed office rents to get to a level whereby office development is not only viable, but desirable.

The office space works because it brings together occupiers of different scales but these occupiers don't worry about this; it is their business function and creativity that unites them rather than their scale and both know the value of co-location in supporting their business growth and development. The 'big-boys' enjoy having access to such fast growing businesses bestowed with creativity, talent and liquidity, whilst the 'minnows' enjoy being located close to such established businesses with their range of clients, stability and reputation. Inevitably, this results in small businesses forming and selling to larger businesses, but it also allows spin-offs to found out of the big businesses – thereby creating a business population covering a diverse spectrum of business sectors and sizes with a complex but supportive ecosystem where collaboration and knowledge exchange is an everyday occurrence.

The scope for collaboration is vast and the whole development, and neighbouring sites, support this spirit of collaboration and innovation. This is thanks largely to the adjacency of the University of Bristol's Enterprise Campus, the presence of dynamic and exciting uses such as EngineShed and Unit DX; Bristol's very own science incubator, and the presence of 'cheaper' modern industrial space to the east which allows space for testing and clean manufacturing.

This theme of collaboration, learning and enterprise continues through the presence of a conference facility on the site, capable of supporting events for around 1,500 – 2,000 people. This space is allied to a 4/5*, 200 bed(?) hotel offer on the site which, drawing on the creative and innovative

reputation of the development, supports the businesses uses on site, caters for visitors to Bristol and also boasts an amazing 'sky-bar' at the top of the building; offering panoramic views over the Grade 1 listed Bristol Temple Meads station, the city centre and to the hills beyond. This has become one of the 'go-to' places for visitors, residents and workers alike and offers further scope for collaboration, relaxation and leisure. The conference facility also acts as a part-time facility for the University of Bristol and ensures that the best use can be made of this space and its proximity to the university campus to the north.

Residential accommodation on the site makes the most of the urban nature of the site; residential blocks deliver a range of 1, 2 and 3 bed flats. These are formed of affordable homes (30%), private sale flats and a large proportion of private rental sectors (PRS) flats. Many of these have been delivered using modern and modular construction techniques, using units manufactured close to Bristol. This has enabled speed of delivery, high levels of quality assurance and created jobs for local people. The integration of PRS flats has allowed further allowed the delivery of substantial numbers of new homes at pace to meet Bristol's housing need, but also support those who can't yet afford to buy their own property to have their own property in Bristol. It also means that graduates, securing their first jobs after leaving the University of Bristol, can remain within the city and take up employment with one of the exciting businesses located within a stones-throw of the site. The development also provides some retirement living in this highly accessible location, which also delivers a more mixed, inter-generational community. Roof terraces offer scope for recreation throughout the day; with edible planting and space for communal relaxation. This residential community also means that the student residences, located to the north of the site, do not dominate the character of the area but instead contribute to a mixed community.

The retail offer on site is modest, but is well thought out and has a Bristolian flavour; with a good range of local, independent businesses. Crucially, the retail offer is also carefully curated to ensure that it supports the other uses on site and adds value to those uses, rather than being managed in isolation. This means that the retailers on site do not compete with the retail heart of the city, but support the community that exists here and support a vibrant economy throughout the day; providing everything from breakfast through to evening cocktails. Retail units are typically small in scale, with most units between 500 – 1,500 sq ft, although a couple of larger units of upto 5,000 sq ft exist – accommodating a larger restaurant and a convenience store. People come here to dwell and to collaborate, spilling out of their offices and homes to engage with the environment around them.

Technology and sustainability are an integral part of this development – with super-fast broadband connections to all properties, district heating connections which minimise fuel costs and fuel poverty and a 'fabric first' approach to building construction in order to demonstrate Bristol's commitment to sustainable development. One of the major office blocks on site has also recently achieved a Well building standard for occupier comfort; a real selling point and something which has further driven occupier interest in space on the site and rents. Car parking provision is minimised on site and the development instead promotes the use of electric pool cars – again appealing to the businesses and residents who occupy the site - whilst cycle stores on site are generous and accommodate comfortable and well-designed changing facilities for employees who commute by bicycle from elsewhere within the city.

Outdoor spaces are designed to have purpose and are constructed with quality materials which provide a modern and creative twist on a 'yard' environment; with primary routes along which people can pass easily and comfortably. Secondary streets are well thought out and all fulfil a function; for relaxation with a coffee, to read a book in the sunshine or for fun, for example; allowing your toddler to follow a small activity or nature trail. These spaces all support the retailers on-site, which are allowed to gently encroach in to public spaces, but not to dominate them or take ownership of them. Technology pervades the public realm; allowing spaces to be used as informal break-out spaces, facilitating collaboration and community engagement.

The site also has a modest provision of cultural facilities on site; using vacant retail units as meanwhile spaces for artists and creatives alike. The public realm at the heart of the site is used for an urban boot-camp early in the morning and the space was designed with this in mind; allowing commuters, residents and workers alike to fit in an early morning work-out before getting breakfast and heading to work for the day.

Temple Yard will be a highly accessible and attractive space to be, giving all who visit it easy access to ideas, inspiration and opportunities. It will encourage business development, including self-employment. It will provide employment opportunities for all Bristolians, old and new, across a range of industries and levels of responsibility. Businesses have worked closely with public agencies to put structures in place to match business need with skills development, and drive real opportunities for career progression amongst the local population.

Finally, the development responds to its environment; it acknowledges its history, its ability to facilitate innovation and creativity and its position on the river as a focus for wildlife, recreation and enjoyment.